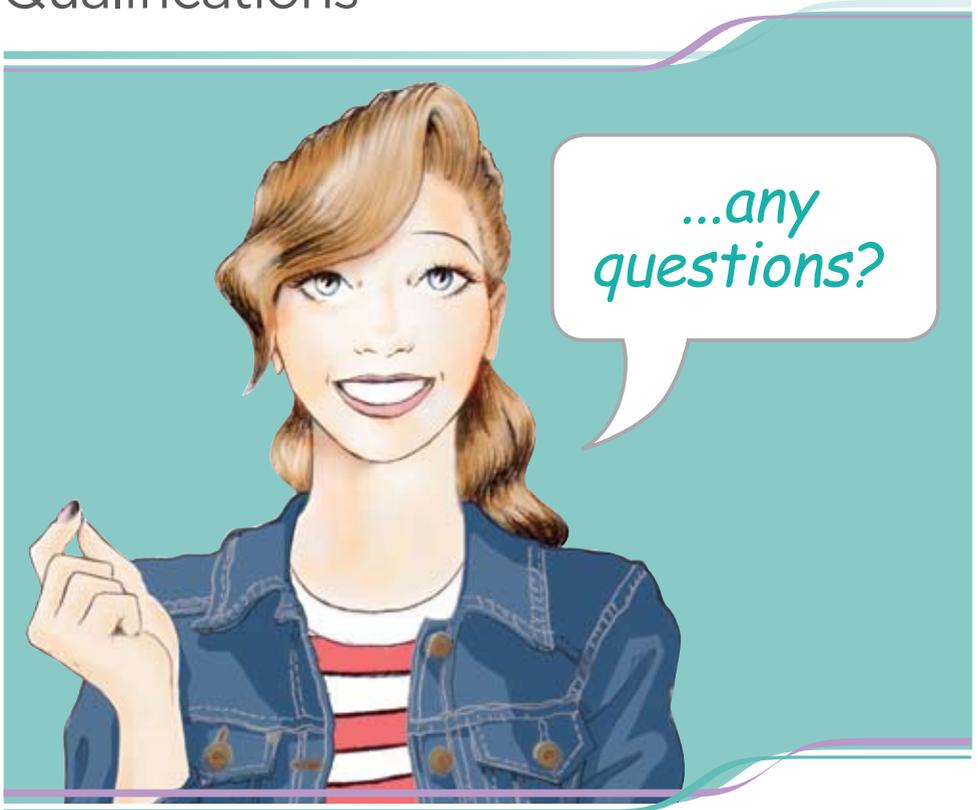


# The new National Qualifications



"The new Nationals, Highers and Advanced Highers are launching across Scotland. I'm here to give you all the information you need to get the most from Scotland's new qualifications."

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*You're probably asking why the old qualifications had to change. It's a fair question.*

These new qualifications are designed not just to keep pace with the modern world, but to put you ahead of the pack. They're designed to reward the skills, knowledge and experience you gain as you learn — they highlight what you can do as well as what you know and they show that your skills, knowledge and understanding meet national standards.

They also take into account that different people learn in different ways, so they are a measure of the individual strengths of each learner.

All the while they remain as credible and trusted as you would expect an SQA qualification to be. So whatever you go on to do, your qualifications will be recognised and respected.

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PS: Give me a shout on Twitter @**MYSQA\_SAM** or Facebook at [www.facebook.com/MYSQA.SAM](http://www.facebook.com/MYSQA.SAM)



## What's changed?

Your new National Qualifications are more practical. They focus more on developing skills, including practical skills, critical-thinking skills, research and investigation skills, essay writing and independent study. That means you're better prepared for what's up ahead.

At the same time, your new qualifications are more personal. They recognise that no two people learn or perform at their best in exactly the same way. So your National Qualifications will reward your strengths, your hard work and skills - both in and out of the classroom.

## How are they different?

Here's how your National Qualifications relate to existing qualifications.

SCQF level	Previous or existing National Qualifications	Replaced by	New National Qualifications
1 and 2	Access 1 and Access 2	▶	National 1 and National 2
3	Access 3 Standard Grade (Foundation level)	▶	National 3
4	Standard Grade (General level) Intermediate 1	▶	National 4
5	Standard Grade (Credit level) Intermediate 2	▶	National 5
6	Higher	▶	Higher (new)
7	Advanced Higher	▶	Advanced Higher (new)

Find out more about your new qualifications, and how they compare with existing SQA qualifications at [www.sqa.org.uk/readyreckoner](http://www.sqa.org.uk/readyreckoner)

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## When is this happening?

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**The first change is already happening.** Some qualifications have made the switch, with the rest on the way between now and next year. It's a good idea to keep yourself up to date, so take a quick look at the information below.

**Available now:** National 2, National 3, National 4 and National 5 Courses. A number of National 1 Units are also available.

**August 2014:** The new Higher, and all remaining National 1 Units.

**August 2015:** The new Advanced Higher.

It's worth noting that not all schools and colleges are making the change at the same time, so have a word with your teacher or lecturer to find out more.

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## How do they actually work?

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All new National Courses include units (areas of study) that you'll be taught throughout the year. Your teacher or lecturer assesses each unit of your work as a pass or fail. The information below shows how units and courses are assessed, and where they can take you.

### National 1 Units

- These are assessed as a pass or fail by your teacher or lecturer.

They could lead to other National 2 Courses, other National 1 Units, or awards at either of these levels.

### National 2 Courses

- These are made up of units.
- They are assessed a pass or fail by your teacher or lecturer.
- You need to pass all units to achieve the qualification.

They could lead to the related Course at National 3 or to other National 2 Units or Courses or Awards.

### National 3 Courses

- These are made up of units.
- They are assessed as a pass or fail by your teacher or lecturer.
- You need to pass all units to achieve the qualification.

They could lead to the related course at National 4, other National 3 Units or Courses or Awards, National Certificates (NCs), National Progression Awards (NPAs) or employment opportunities.

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## How do they actually work?

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### National 4 Courses

- These are made up of units - including an Added Value Unit that assesses your overall performance across the Course.
- They are assessed as a pass or fail by your teacher or lecturer.
- You need to pass all units, including the Added Value Unit, to achieve the qualification.

They could lead to the related course at National 5, other National 4 Units or Courses or Awards, National Certificates (NCs), National Progression Awards (NPAs), Modern Apprenticeships or other employment opportunities.

### National 5 Courses

- These are made up of units and a course assessment.
- They're graded A to D or 'no award'.
- They involve a question paper (exam) or coursework (assignments, practical activities and so on), or both an exam and coursework, for the course assessment.
- We (Scottish Qualifications Authority) assess them externally, although your teacher or lecturer will mark coursework in some subjects.

They could lead to the related course at Higher; other National 5 Units or Courses/Awards, National Certificates (NCs), National Progression Awards (NPAs), Modern Apprenticeships or other employment opportunities.

Some new National Courses will automatically certify Core Skills. To find out more, visit [www.sqa.org.uk/coreskills](http://www.sqa.org.uk/coreskills)

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## How do they actually work?

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### Higher Courses

- These are made up of units and a course assessment.
- They are graded A to D or 'no award'.
- Involve a question paper (exam) or coursework (assignments, practical activities and so on), or both, for the course assessment.
- We assess them externally, although your teacher or lecturer will assess coursework in some subjects.

They could lead to the related course at Advanced Higher, other Higher Courses, Scottish Baccalaureates, National Certificates (NCs), National Progression Awards (NPAs), HNC/HND Courses, an undergraduate degree, technical apprenticeships or other employment opportunities.

### Advanced Higher Courses

- These are made up of units and a course assessment.
- They are graded A to D or 'no award'.
- Involve a question paper (exam) or coursework (assignments, practical activities and so on), or both, for the course assessment.
- We assess them externally, although your teacher or lecturer will assess coursework in some subjects.

They could lead to an HND Course, an undergraduate degree or employment opportunities.

You can find out more about how your new National Qualifications are assessed at [www.sqa.org.uk/cfeassessment](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfeassessment)

### What if I have additional support needs, or I'm disabled?

We can make special assessment arrangements for you in exams and assessments. For example, we may arrange for you to type on a laptop rather than write by hand.

Find out more at [www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements)

Find out more about additional support in National Literacy Units at [www.sqa.org.uk/literacysupportforlearners](http://www.sqa.org.uk/literacysupportforlearners)



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## How do I prepare for my new qualifications?

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The good news is, loads of help is available.

*"Below I've listed the study resources I think you'll find most useful."*

### 1. Specimen question papers

These are brilliant because they show you what your new exams are going to look like. You'll see how they're structured and what they ask you to do. Find them at [www.sqa.org.uk/browsecfesubjects](http://www.sqa.org.uk/browsecfesubjects)

### 2. Past papers

These are great for giving you an understanding of a test during revision. Remember to give your teacher or lecturer a shout as they can tell you the questions that are most useful to you. You'll get these at [www.sqa.org.uk/pastpapers/findpastpaper.htm](http://www.sqa.org.uk/pastpapers/findpastpaper.htm)

### 3. General assessment information

Information on the coursework you'll do as part of the course assessment. Find it at [www.sqa.org.uk/browsecfesubjects](http://www.sqa.org.uk/browsecfesubjects)

### 4. Exam tools

This is a seriously helpful tool. Use it to get the exam timetable, create your own personalised exam timetable, and get organised with a study plan. Find it at [www.sqa.org.uk/examtools](http://www.sqa.org.uk/examtools)

### 5. BBC Bitesize

Free interactive revision help for the new National Courses. Just visit [www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize)

### 6. Young Scot

Great for information and advice on preparing for course assessments. Includes revision and stress-busting tips too. Take a look at [www.youngscot.org](http://www.youngscot.org)

### 7. The Student Room

For general study help go to [www.thestudentroom.co.uk](http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk)

*"I'm on there too."*

### 8. Revision in a nutshell

The National Parent Forum of Scotland (NPFs) has produced handy revision guides. They include links to past papers, useful websites and other online resources. Find them at [www.npfs.org.uk](http://www.npfs.org.uk)

### 9. Hodder Education revision materials

These are perfect for SQA qualifications — and they include model National 5 question papers. Go to [www.hoddereducation.co.uk](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk)

## Any other questions?

### Will I sit prelims?

It's up to your school or college. Prelims aren't part of how the new qualifications are assessed, but your teachers or lecturers may still choose to have them.

### What happens if I receive a fail or 'no award' result?

You'll still get the credits for any units you've passed. You'll find them on the Record of Attainment section of your qualifications certificate pack.

### Results services

Two new results services have replaced the old appeals service.

The new results services are:

- exceptional circumstances consideration service
- post-results service

To find out more, visit

[www.sqa.org.uk/resultsservices](http://www.sqa.org.uk/resultsservices)

### Awards and Scottish Baccalaureates

There are new awards in Personal Development, Personal Achievement, Modern Languages for Life and Work, Religion, Belief and Values, Wellbeing, Cycling and Scottish Studies.

See the full range at

[www.sqa.org.uk/awards](http://www.sqa.org.uk/awards)

Scottish Baccalaureates are qualifications at SCQF level 7. These are for learners in S5 and S6, and include Expressive Arts, Languages, Science, and Social Sciences.

You can find out more at

[www.sqa.org.uk/baccalaureates](http://www.sqa.org.uk/baccalaureates)

If you fall short of achieving the National 5 course assessment, a new arrangement called Recognising Positive Achievement means you could achieve the qualification at National 4 instead. Your teacher or lecturer can tell you more.

There's a guide to Recognising Positive Achievement at

[www.sqa.org.uk/rpa](http://www.sqa.org.uk/rpa)

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## National Qualifications with a focus on work

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### Skills for Work Courses

These courses are all about helping you get to know about the demands and expectations of the world of work. There are lots of courses, covering everything from beauty to construction, and health to hospitality.

Take a look at [www.sqa.org.uk/skillsforwork](http://www.sqa.org.uk/skillsforwork)

### National Progression Awards (NPAs) and National Certificates (NCs)

NPAs and NCs prepare you for employment, career development or studying at HNC/HND level. Both assess your skills and knowledge in specialist work-based areas and are available in lots of subjects.

You'll find more information at [www.sqa.org.uk/npa](http://www.sqa.org.uk/npa)

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## Who can I talk to about the new qualifications?

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We have sent information about the new qualifications to teachers, lecturers, parents and carers so they know what's happening too. Why not chat about the changes with them?

### **We've been keeping everyone in the loop**

We are making sure schools, colleges, universities and employers are bang up to date. Universities are looking at their entry requirements in relation to the new Qualifications, and they've published statements that outline their position regarding Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). For more information visit [www.sqa.org.uk/cfeforyoungpeople](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfeforyoungpeople)



## Online help and information

And remember, for help, advice and answers about the new qualifications, exams and SQA you'll find me on Twitter: @MYSQA\_SAM and on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/MYSQA.SAM](http://www.facebook.com/MYSQA.SAM)

### *WIN AN iPad MINI!*

Tell me what you think of the new look leaflet and you could win one of 10 iPad Minis!  
Complete the survey at [www.sqa.org.uk/ipadmini](http://www.sqa.org.uk/ipadmini) before 31 July 2014



it can  
be done  SQA

CfE Liaison Team  
[www.sqa.org.uk/cfeteam](http://www.sqa.org.uk/cfeteam)  
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